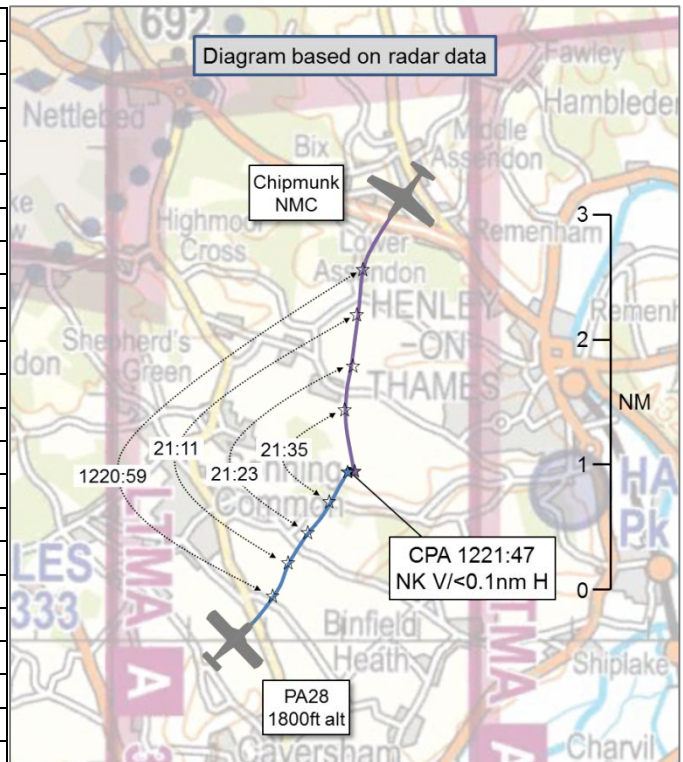


**AIRPROX REPORT No 2015188**

Date: 14 Oct 2015 Time: 1222Z Position: 5131N 00057W Location: 7nm SW Wycombe

**PART A: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO UKAB**

Recorded	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2
Aircraft	PA28	Chipmunk
Operator	Civ Club	Civ Pte
Airspace	London FIR	London FIR
Class	G	G
Rules	VFR	VFR
Service	Aerodrome	None
Provider	Wycombe	N/A
Altitude/FL	1800ft	NMC
Transponder	A, C	No squawk <sup>1</sup>
Reported		
Colours	White, grey	Silver
Lighting	NK	Nav
Conditions	VMC	VMC
Visibility	20km	NK
Altitude/FL	1500ft	1500-2300ft
Altimeter	NK (1008hPa)	NK (NK hPa)
Heading	040°	Various
Speed	100kt	Various
ACAS/TAS	Unknown	Not fitted
Separation		
Reported	Not seen at CPA	Not seen
Recorded	NK V/<0.1nm H	



**THE PA28 PILOT** reports proceeding straight and level towards his destination; clearance had been obtained for a straight-in approach. He was suddenly confronted by a vertically ascending Chipmunk, performing a loop directly ahead of his flight path. He observed the Chipmunk to the top of the loop to assess his need for action, and it rapidly became clear that he would have to take evasive action [as it descended]. He made a severe right turn and dive and lost sight of the Chipmunk as he did so.

He assessed the risk of collision as 'High'.

**THE CHIPMUNK PILOT** reports that he was maintaining a listening watch with White Waltham and that he did not see the other aircraft. He commented that he always performed a 360° lookout turn before each aerobatic manoeuvre but that during the manoeuvre he would be checking the wings against the horizon.

**Factual Background**

The weather at Wycombe was recorded as follows:

METAR EGUB 141250Z 35012KT 9999 SCT026 BKN040 12/06 Q1023 BLU TEMPO 7000 SHRA SCT022 WHT  
 METAR EGUB 141150Z 35012KT 9999 SCT024 SCT044 12/06 Q1023 WHT TEMPO FEW024 BLU

<sup>1</sup> The pilot reported that the SSR transponder was on with Mode C off. The radar replay showed a primary track only.

## Analysis and Investigation

### UKAB Secretariat

The PA28 and Chipmunk pilots shared an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and not to operate in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a collision hazard<sup>2</sup>. If the incident geometry is considered as head-on or nearly so then both pilots were required to turn to the right<sup>3</sup>.

### Summary

An Airprox was reported when a PA28 and a Chipmunk flew into proximity at 1222 on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Both pilots were operating under VFR in VMC, the PA28 pilot probably in receipt of an Aerodrome Control Service from Wycombe Tower and the Chipmunk pilot listening out on the White Waltham frequency.

### **PART B: SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S DISCUSSIONS**

Information available consisted of reports from both pilots and radar photographs/video recordings.

Members commented that this Airprox had occurred in a busy volume of airspace with competing demands as transiting traffic routed through an area popular also for GH and aerobatics. Whilst there was no restriction on aerobatics in that area, some members wondered whether it might have been a wiser course of action for the Chipmunk pilot to have positioned further to the west, where the base of the London TMA was higher, thereby allowing for a greater volume of available airspace. On the other hand, members wondered whether the PA28 pilot had been imbued with a false sense of security, having been cleared for a straight-in approach to Wycombe Air Park, albeit still 7nm SW of the airfield. It was not possible to discern the Chipmunk loop manoeuvre on radar but it was surmised from the aircrafts' tracks that the Chipmunk pilot had pulled up into a loop in front of the approaching PA28, whose pilot then took avoiding action as the Chipmunk descended on the far side of the loop. Noting that he had seen the Chipmunk as it ascended ahead of him, some members felt that the PA28 pilot could reasonably have taken action immediately at that point by changing his track, probably by turning to the right so that he could maintain visual contact with the Chipmunk.

It was noted by the Board that neither pilot was in receipt of a FIS from Farnborough LARS (W). The PA28 pilot was talking to Wycombe, but without a radar they could offer little assistance in collision avoidance. For his part, and although it was entirely his choice, it may have assisted if the Chipmunk pilot had squawked 7004 (aerobatics and display) and informed LARS of his operating area. This might have meant that Farnborough could then have pre-warned the PA28 pilot before he switched to Wycombe's frequency (assuming he had been talking to Farnborough beforehand). In this instance, the Board also noted that the Chipmunk was not transponding (whether due to pilot selection or equipment unserviceability was not clear), and the Board reiterated its advice that SSR transponders should always be on with all available Modes selected. In this way, not only is the aircraft apparent to ATC, but TAS and TCAS systems on other aircraft can indicate and alert to provide a barrier to potential mid-air collision to the benefit of all. The subject of airfields located close to each other coordinating their GH and operating areas was also discussed, and members wondered whether there was potential for White Waltham and Wycombe Air Park to inform each other of areas of planned activity.

Turning to the cause and risk, members agreed that, ultimately, the pilots had an equal responsibility for collision avoidance and that they had flown into proximity due to a late sighting by the PA28 pilot and a non-sighting by the Chipmunk pilot. It was also agreed that, although the PA28 pilot had taken avoiding action, separation at CPA was such that safety margins had been much reduced.

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<sup>2</sup> SERA.3205 Proximity.

<sup>3</sup> SERA.3210 Right-of-way (c) (1) Approaching head-on.

**PART C: ASSESSMENT OF CAUSE AND RISK**

Cause: A late sighting by the PA28 pilot and a non-sighting by the Chipmunk pilot.

Degree of Risk: B.